

Good News and Bad News
Traditional Leadership for Future Generations Conference
St. FX University, Antigonish, N.S.
May 19, 20, 21 2006
www.traditionalleadership.ca

Good news and bad news but for the most part, it's all good news! **First**, the good news is that there are still some spaces available for this exciting event and we have a fantastic line up of speakers and participants registered so far for the Traditional Leadership for Future Generations Conference. **The bad news** is that our spaces are limited, filling up very quickly, so register now before it's too late and all the spaces are filled. Participants must be between the ages of 18 – 25 to be eligible for sponsorship to conference. If interested, you can speak to your chief or band council or contact our office. More good news is that there are also some booth spaces and sponsorship opportunities available. Organizations, institutions, governments and individuals who want to connect, network, learn and hear from over 100 Aboriginal Youth from across the Atlantic region should take advantage of this first time conference of it's kind.

There will be great opportunities throughout the three day event to learn from elders, keepers of traditional knowledge and members of the Grand Council. In return for the sharing of their knowledge, they too will learn and gain understanding from the 100 youth delegates expected to attend. The Grand Chief and members of the Grand Council will participate in discussion circles with youth between 18 -25 from across the region who are our future leaders. There will be film screenings throughout the event while circles of discussion on various topics will be led invited guests who have much to share with our youth.

In keeping with our traditions, Kerry Prosper and the Afton Drummers will welcome us to their traditional territory during our opening ceremony on Friday April 19 at 3 pm.. PEI Grand Council member, John Joe Sark will present his film, Spirit World the first evening followed by a discussion with John Joe and Maliseet Elder Ray Tremblay. A sunrise ceremony on Saturday morning will help us to focus on our traditional ways. We look forward to learning from role models like Chad Denny or elders like Chief Misel Joe, Murdena Marshall, Lillian Marshall Kerry will share some traditional knowledge on American Eels and has offered to conduct a sweat for the men. As well, Judy Peters has offered to conduct a sweat for the women while Miiga'magan, Murdena Marshall and Lillian Marshall help us to learn about traditional role of women in our society.

There will be several films screened throughout the three days featuring many of our guest presenters such as Chief Misel Joe's Spiritwind journey from Nfld. to N.S. in a birch bark canoe, "Is the Crown At War With Us" on the Burnt Church Fishing Dispute with Miiga'magan, CBC's Animation the Little Boy Who Lived with Muini'skw with Murdena Marshall, NFB's Mi'kmaq Family, Treaty Trials and Tribulations by April Maloney, APC's new film on Treaties, Steven J. Augustines film on the Creation Story and more! Of course it wouldn't be a gathering without some of our top entertainment like hip hop and rap artists from New Brunswick, fiddler, Moonie Francis, actor Glen Gould, Karoake King Jimmy Augustine with sister Donna Augustine and fancy shawl dancer Samantha Lewis of PEI will keep us moving throughout the evening socials. There are many more presenters and discussion circles planned. See our website or contact our office for the complete agenda.

This first conference will bring together the Mi'kmaq Grand Council and youth from the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet communities across the Atlantic Region. It is the first of many future gatherings to come. It was initiated through discussions between Conference Directors and members of the Mi'kmaq Grand Council in hopes to bring youth together to learn about traditional leadership and their traditional role within their communities. There is a great need for a youth network and organization across the region. This will help to provide our youth with a voice, a forum to share their concerns, issues and ideas on their future roles as leaders.

The objectives of this first conference are:

- To gather Atlantic First Nations youth from both Mi'kmaq and Maliseet Nations in a conference that shares ideas about leadership, traditional and contemporary, and strategies for engaging Atlantic First Nations youth in committee based on the youth strategy developed by APCFNC.
- To research the traditional government of the Mi'kmaq with members of the Grand Council, in dialogue and discussions with youth, and through presentations provided by members of the Grand Council themselves and by those who are recognized as authorities on the subject.
- To publish a compilation of papers and transcribed discussions in a published curriculum in consultation and approved by the Mi'kmaq Grand Council on their role in a post-colonial society.
- To strengthen respect and harmony among the youth for the traditional governments as they are introduced to and learn from the members of Grand Council.
- To reclaim and renew Mi'kmaq identity among First Nations youth through learning from about traditional forms of governance and about the keepers of Indigenous Knowledge.
- To gather youth interested in leadership and governance and to build networks among them so that they may decide amongst themselves who will represent them at the National level on behalf of the AFN NYC.

The Eskasoni Culture Recreation & Youth (ECRY) committee and the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat (APCFNC) have worked diligently in the preparation for this conference. Conference Directors Jaime Battiste and Leroy Denny took the lead and approached several organizations and government departments to secure financial support to realize this goal. The generous support from our funding partners is greatly appreciated.

At least two youth ages 18- 25 from each community throughout the region will be selected to attend this conference. They will be selected by their communities to attend and there are still some spaces available for additional youth to attend. Those wishing to attend should contact the conference office at **902-379-2269**, email us at traditionalleadership@hotmail.ca or visit our website. www.traditionalleadership.ca